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ABSTRACT

The amount of time students are exposed to material is one measure of student access to learning opportunities. This information sheet compares instructional time for students in several developed countries. However, how effectively classroom time is used had the greatest influence on student learning. The average amount of time 13-year-olds spent in instruction during the 1990-91 school year ranged from 875 hours in Japan to 1,177 hours in Taiwan. Students in the United States spent over 1,000 hours exposed to instruction, slightly more than students in Canada, England, Korea, and Germany. Public and private students in the United States spend about the same amounts of time in school, but the average time in school does vary across the states, from around 1,100 hours in Hawaii and Maine to around 1,250 hours in Mississippi. Two tables, one graph, and a map illustrate the amount of time students spend in school. (SLD)

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ED 367 667

TIME IN THE CLASSROOM

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS
INDICATOR OF THE MONTH

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Time in the classroom

November 1993

The approach taken toward the instruction of youth varies both between and within countries. The amount of time students are exposed to material is one indicator of students access to learning opportunities. But how effectively classroom time is used has the greatest influence on student learning.

- **The average amount of time 13-year-old students spent in instruction during 1990-91 school year ranged from 875 hours in Japan to 1,177 hours in Taiwan. Students in the United States spent over 1,000 hours exposed to instruction, slightly more than their counterparts in Canada, England, Korea, and Germany.**
- **Public and private school students in the United States spend about the same amount of time in school.**
- **The average amount of time public school students spent in school varied a great deal across states, from around 1,100 hours in Hawaii and Maine to around 1,250 hours in Mississippi. This 150 hour difference could amount to almost 5 weeks of instruction.**

Instructional time in the classroom of 13-year-olds, by country: School year 1990-91

Larger countries	Average days per year	Average hours per day	Average hours per year
Canada	188	5.1	953
England	192	5.0	960
France	174	6.2	1,073
Germany	210	4.6	966
Japan	220	4.0	875
Korea	222	4.4	977
Taiwan	222	5.3	1,177
United States	178	5.6	1,003

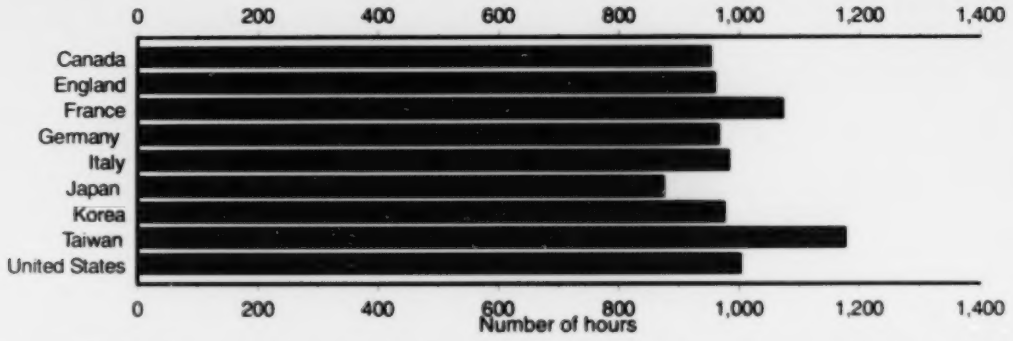
Amount of time spent in school by U.S. students, by level, urbanicity, and control of school: School year 1990-91

	Public			Private		
Level and urbanicity	Average days per year	Average hours per day	Average hours per year	Average days per year	Average hours per day	Average hours per year
Total	180	6.4	1,154	180	6.5	1,163
Elementary	179	6.4	1,148	179	6.4	1,147
Secondary	180	6.5	1,171	181	6.7	1,205
Combined	183	6.4	1,168	181	6.6	1,186
Rural/small town	179	6.5	1,167	179	6.5	1,167
Urban fringe/large town	181	6.3	1,142	180	6.4	1,161
Central city	180	6.3	1,142	180	6.5	1,163

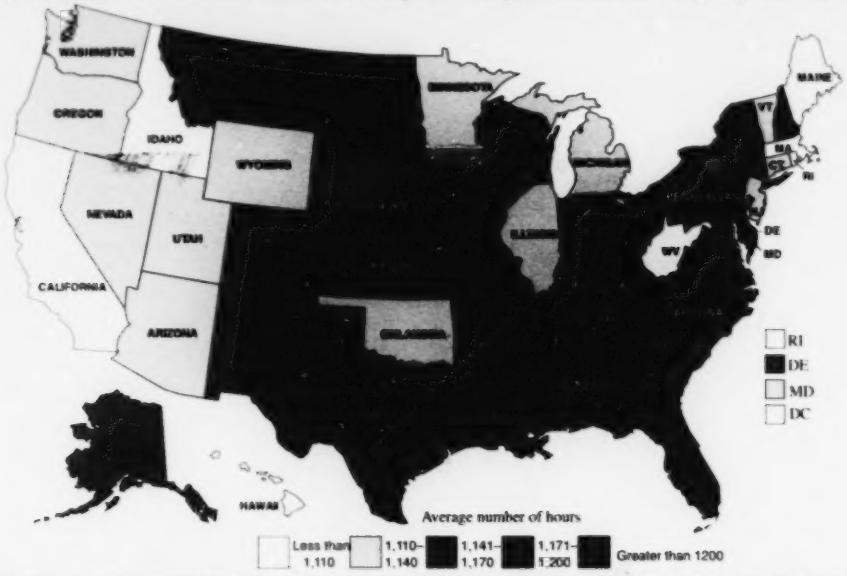
NOTE: *Instructional time in the classroom* and the *amount of time spent in school* are not the same. The first is a measure of the time per day students spend exposed to educational instruction, while the second a measure of the length of the school day, which includes lunch-time, recess, etc. These two measures should not be directly compared.

SOURCE: Educational Testing Service, International Assessment of Educational Progress. Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture, Government of Japan. The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1990-91.

Average number of hours of classroom instruction in a school year, by country: 1990-91



Average number of hours students spent in public schools, by state: 1990-91



SOURCE: Educational Testing Service, International Assessment of Educational Progress. Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Government of Japan. The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1990–91.

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